THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Government have, in principle, approved the proposal to set up the India Brand Promotion Fund. However, no specific amount has been earmarked.

(b) and (c) Details regarding the constitution of Fund and its management and also the scope and nature of activities to be covered under the Fund are yet to be worked out. World Bank has no role to play under this Fund.

Central Government Projects Running Behind Schedule

736. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government project in large number are running behind schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is a steep escalation of the cost of these projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to complete such projects without cost escalation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Yes Sir, as on 1.7.95 out of 383 projects on the monitor of Department of Programme Implementation 213 projects were running behind schedule with reference to their latest approved schedule.

(b) The extent of delay varied from project to project and it ranges between 1-161 months. The main reasons for the delay are land acquisition and related problems of rehabilitation, fund constraints and delay in supply of equipment, etc.

(c) Yes Sir, out of 383 projects 146 projects have reported cost escalation.

(d) The Overall cost escalation of 146 projects was 59.6% with reference to the latest approved cost estimates. The main reasons for the cost escalation are the time overrun, inflation, exchange rate variation and under estimation/omission in the origional estimates of the projects. The various steps taken by the Government to improve the project implementation of the project are indicated in Statement laid on the table of the House.

Statement

STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO STREAMLINE FOR PREPARING THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

(i) Two-stage project approval to assure adequate preparation, environmental and other clearances and infrastructure planning at stage I before a project is finally approved for implementation at stage II.

(ii) Simplified procedures for approval of revised cost estimates under which the cost escalation on account of reasons beyond the control of an enterprise, within the original gestation period, is to be sanctioned by the Administrative Ministry in consultation with the Planning Commission. Only revised cost estimates exceeding 5% of the approved cost estimates on account of factors other than those indicated above are to be submitted to the Public Investment Board/Cabinet Committees on Economic Affairs for approval.

(iii) Intensive monitoring of projects at various levels. This enables the monitoring agencies to

identify constraints and help the management in taking remedial measures.

(iv) Indepth critical review of the progress by the project Authorities and Administrative Ministries.

(v) Setting up of Task Force/ Empowered Committees for speedy finalisation of contract packages, solving land acquisition and other problems.

(vi) Close follow up by the Department of Programme Implementation, concerned administrative Ministries and Project authorities with the State Government, equipment suppliers, contractors, consultants and other concerned agencies to minimise delays.

(vii) Inter-ministerial coordination and interaction.

(viii) Emphasis on preparation of realistic project implementation plan.

(ix) Review by the Committee of Secretaries of the specific projects facing constraints.

Indo-Mauritius Trade

737. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the areas in which Indo-Mauritius trade has been established;

(b) whether Government have found new areas for the expansion of Indo-Mauritius trade relation; and

(c) if so, the details of those new areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) It is the endeavour of the Govt. to expand trade relations with African countries including Mauritius having potential market by:—

(1) Exchange of Industry & Trade delegations;

(2) Holding of exclusive Indian Exhibitions/Fairs;

(3) Holding of periodic official level bilateral discussions to resolve bottlenecks;

(4) Holding of regional conferences of Commerical Representatives of Indian Missions to identify emerging opportunities.

As against the export turnover from India to Mauritius of Rs. 268.55 crores in 1993-94, exports from India to Mauritius during 1994-95 reached Rs 357.89 crores thus showing a rising trend.

It is primarily for the trade and business organisations of the two countries to select items for export and import from each other depending on the requirements and competitiveness of the goods. However, the main items of export from and import by india are;

EXPORT ITEMS: Cotton yarn, fabrics, Madeups; Manmade yarn, fabrics, Madeups; Manufactures of metals; Meat & preparations; Transport equipments; Plastic and Linoleum products; Natural Silk Yarn, fabrics, Madeups; marine products etc.

IMPORT ITEMS: Metalifers ores & metal scrap; Computer software; Organic chemcials; Medicinal & Pharmaceuticals Products etc.

ब्राजील से कम मूल्य पर चीनी का आयात

738. श्री सोमपाल: क्या खाद्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान दिनांक 14 जुलाई, 1995 के इकानामिक्स टाइम्स में प्रकाशित उस समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है जिसमें गत वर्ष हुए चीनी आयात संबंधी घोटाले के समय